SUBJECTS.

158. *Improvement of irrigation works in Shencotta.*

Dewan's reply.—Will be brought to the notice of the Railway authorities.

Mr. E. Ramier (Member, Shencotta Taluk) thanked the Dewan for having inspected the Irrigation works in the Shencotta Taluk on two occasions since he assumed the administration of the State. He then spoke on the condition of the Irrigation works and said that the wet lands in the Taluk depended on them for their water-supply and the tanks and channels were neither sufficient in number nor in the best condition. The 'Minor Irrigation works,' namely, those used for irrigating lands below 200 acres which formed the great majority of the Irrigation works received much less attention than the 'Major Irrigation works'. This difference in treatment, he said, was not justifiable as there was no difference in the assessment. He then referred to the incidence of taxation on wet lands which he said was very heavy amounting to Rs. 20—Rs. 30 for *perumpattu* lands. Such being the case, Government was bound to improve the Irrigation works. During the administration of Mr. Rama Row, Government sanctioned for five years a lakh of rupees and every year Rs.20,000 was spent. That, however, was not a great or sufficient amount, but something was done. During the last ten years, however, very little money was spent in that direction. A scheme for the extension of the beds of tanks was started ten years ago, but has yet to be given effect to. The people thought that the Settlement would bring relief to them in respect of assessment which was much heavier than in the adjoining villages of British India. But that relief was yet to come. In conclusion, he suggested that professional men should thoroughly investigate the condition of all the tanks in the Taluk, their water capacity, and the extensions that are required and requested that the subject might receive early and favourable consideration at the hands of Government. He further requested that sufficient sums might be allotted for the next few years towards improving the tanks and channels and that the most urgent works might be taken in hand at once, that Government might be pleased to exercise the option of remitting the cost of repairing Minor Irrigation works under clause 2 of section 16 Regulation III of 1072.

Dewan's reply.—Government are aware that the Irrigation works in the Shencotta Taluk have not been receiving that attention which they deserve. I may assure you that Government will do everything to start the required investigation and to take steps to put the Irrigation works in the Taluk in thorough order.

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